132 On the western slope of the plateau and in the extreme south the
197 climate is hot and semi-arid to arid. The ground is covered with
clumps of low trees and thorny scrub, interspersed with stretches of
[169] grass land. In many places it is difficult to obtain water. In spite
of the aridity there is much fever in this region, making it unhealthy
for Europeans.

101 The various environments just described are reflected in the
culture of the natives of the different regions. The people of the east
coast are mainly fishermen and agriculturists, with little dependence
on cattle. Those of the plateau are mainly agricultural, but with
cattle of greater economic importance. Those of the south and west
[113] subsist almost entirely on their herds. (For a discussion of these
differences see Linton: Culture Areas in Madagascar, American
Anthropology, Vol. XXIX. No. 3.)

[130] The Tanala occupy approximately the southern third of the
eastern massif. Their territory lies roughly between 20° 30' and
22° 30' south latitude and between 46° and 48° 30' east longitude.
On the last they extend, in places, to within a day's march of the sea,
but nowhere reach the coast. On the west and south their territory
everywhere ends at the edge of the open grass lands.

As neighbors they have, on the south and southwest, the Bara,
who are a cattle people with a culture of west coast type. On the
west lie the Betsileo and on the northwest the Imerina, both of plateau
culture. On the north are the Betsimisaraka, of mixed plateau and east
coast culture, and on the northeast the Betsimisaraka, of east coast
culture. On the east lie three tribes, the Antaimbahoaka, Antaimorona
and Antaifasina, who claim Arab descent and unquestionably have
come under strong Arab influence.

?17 The Tanala thus lie at the meeting point of four rather distinct
types of culture. Influences from all of these can be traced in the
historic culture of the tribe. However, the extent and importance of
these influences vary greatly in different parts of the Tanala terri-
tory. The region inhabited by the Tanala Ikongo, in the south,
presented few natural obstacles to invasion and was relatively desir-
able. It lay between the territories of two unusually vigorous and
aggressive tribes, the Bara and Antaimorona. As a result, it was
constantly being entered by groups coming from the southeast coast
and cattle areas. These conquered and amalgamated with the earlier
inhabitants, imposing much of their own culture.

177 The territory of the Tanala Menabe, in the north, was much less
166 desirable. It was extremely mountainous, with almost impenetrable

I. Lismo B-6 (1926-27) 1932 P19 Tanala P19

jungle and heavy rain throughout a large part of the year. There 177
was little to tempt invaders; but in time it came to be occupied by 176
defeated groups who had been driven from the more desirable coast
and plateau. Once established, these groups had little contact with
the outside world. There was almost no trade. Their neighbors to
the east and north were lethargic and they were protected from the
more warlike plateau tribes partly by their poverty in cattle and
partly by the plateau people's dislike for jungle fighting. Diffusion
from the neighboring areas was, therefore, reduced to a minimum.

According to Menabe traditions the aboriginal inhabitants of 178
their territory were of very low culture. They offered no resistance 179
to the settlement of the invading people and soon amalgamated with
them. The early invaders, coming from both coast and plateau, are
said to have been fairly uniform in culture. Possibly many of the
historic differences between these areas had not yet been developed.
The method of life which they established has continued in the region
down to the present time with only slight modifications. Certain
new features have been adopted, but these can be checked by reliable
traditions which give both the group from whom the new trait was
borrowed and the approximate time of its introduction.

The culture of the Tanala Menabe is still uniform in most details, 101
the only really divergent division being the Zafimaniry, who came
into the region from the plateau in relatively recent times. In com-
parison with the other Madagascar cultures it is relatively simple and
I believe it to be archaic. In many respects it agrees closely with the
ancient culture of the more advanced tribes, as revealed in their
traditions.

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give each other sympathy in their affliction. If one was castrated alone, he would die of grief. The Betsileo have a similar belief, but I could not learn whether it was universal among the Tanala. 225

Most of the Tanala territory is poorly suited to cattle culture because of the heavy forest and constant rain. It is only along the eastern margin of their lands, where they border on the plateau, that one finds real grazing country. The Tanala herds are usually small and, although cattle have great social significance, they contribute little to the physical well-being of the people. They are only killed in connection with ceremonies, and the average Tanala does not taste beef once a month. Indeed, cattle killings are so rare that to dream of cutting or eating beef is a bad omen, presaging a funeral in the family. Hides are so little used that, until European traders provided a market for them, it was customary to cut up the animals without flaying them and cook meat and skin together. 289 341 [302] [787] [439]

The Menabe consider milk a luxury, and it is almost impossible to purchase it in their territory. It is a by-product, taken only when the cow seems to have more than enough to feed her calf. Milking, like everything else connected with cattle, is done exclusively by men. The explanation given for this is that it is a dangerous occupation. Actually, it is a laborious process, requiring three persons. One man holds the calf where the cow can see and lick it, another milks, usually squatting on the right side, and a third holds the cow's tail over her back and gently rubs her vagina with his fingers. The milk is boiled at once, while still warm. It is considered disgusting to drink it fresh. After boiling, it is either drunk or cooked with rice. 234 462 [283]

The Ikongo make more use of milk and are somewhat more expert at milking, although they use the same method. They rarely boil their milk. A little is drunk fresh, but most of it is deliberately soured. A little sour milk is always left in the milking gourd so that the new milk turns almost at once. The curds are eaten with a spoon and the whey drunk. None of the Tanala know how to make butter or cheese. 234 252 [204]

Apparently cow's milk was rarely if ever used to supplement or replace mother's milk in feeding nursing infants. The idea has recently been borrowed from Europeans, but it is still considered rather unnatural and is used only as a last resort. 853 177

The wheel and plow were unknown in Madagascar prior to European contact. The Tanala never use their cattle for draught or transport and this holds for the rest of the island, with one or two exceptions. The Imerina and Betsileo now use ox carts and 177 492

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

177 492 formerly had a few riding oxen. Both of these are due to European contact. The Tsimahety, at the northern end of the plateau, use oxen as pack animals and apparently have done so since pre-European times. The loads are placed in cloth bags, which are slung across the animal behind the hump, one hanging on each side.

233 556 It is safe to say that if all the cattle belonging to the Tanala Menabe were destroyed over night, no member of the tribe would miss a meal or suffer any other serious hardship. Their loss would be somewhat more serious to the Ikongo, but they would still be able to get along quite well without them. In spite of this lack of practical value, cattle are everywhere of great social importance. [454] With the possible exception of slaves, which no longer exist, they represent the only form of interest-bearing investment possible under native conditions. Every man tries to accumulate as many as possible and his standing in the community is largely determined by [777] the size of his herd. Charms to increase the fertility of cattle are common and cattle are only sold or killed in case of absolute necessity. They are regarded almost as members of the family and the idiosyncrasies of each animal are well known. One informant told me that they are the only animals which possess souls. They are not regarded [782] as sacred, but the killing of an ox, either as a sacrifice or for meat, is an integral part of practically all important ceremonies.

685 556 Although the Tanala consider ordinary theft as one of the most serious of all offenses, cattle stealing is regarded as honorable so long as the members of one's own village are not molested. In fact, it is considered a proper occupation for a young man of spirit and offers an easy road to wealth and advancement. The native attitude is comparable to that of our own Plains Indians toward horse [721] stealing. Cattle formed the most important part of the spoil in warfare and a successful theft was in the nature of a war exploit. European efforts to suppress it have rather heightened the thief's prestige by increasing his hazards.

541 764 Bull baiting and watching fighting bulls were both important sports in pre-European times. They still persist, but are becoming rare. I could get no information on bull baiting among the Ikongo, but it was probably a regular part of important funerals there, as among the Menabe. In the latter group it was customary, in the course of the funeral festivities, to drive up one or two bulls. These were baited by the young men, who would incite them to charge and then avoid their rushes, swing by their tails, leap on their backs, etc. A favorite trick was to await the charge, catch the bull's

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281 415 tail are tied together. The tension draws the strip of bamboo against the belt, closing the opening (Fig. 5, d). Similar belts are used by the southeast coast tribes but are rare or lacking elsewhere in Madagascar.

POTTERY

323 173 According to the legends and traditions of the Tanala Menabe, the Zafimaniry were the only gens of that division to manufacture or use pottery in ancient times. Later, several other gentes learned the art from them and from the Betsileo, but they never became good potters and abandoned clay vessels as soon as iron pots became common. It is remembered that the pottery was limited to crude cooking pots except among the Zafimaniry, who had bowls and water jars as well, but the methods of manufacture and even the shapes have been forgotten.

[114] According to the manuscript of Sadaro Antoine the Tanala Ikongo manufactured cooking pots as recently as twenty years ago. The ware is said to have been hard and well fired. It was given a black, glossy finish by rubbing it with graphite.

A number of Madagascar tribes, including all those on the east coast, make no pottery. Other tribes, who now use it, say that they have only begun to do so within the last five or six generations. It seems probable that it was introduced into Madagascar in relatively [117] late times. The local center for its diffusion seems to be among the Imerina and Betsileo, in the plateau, with a possible second center among the northern Sakalava, on the west coast.

METHODS OF COOKING

252 In describing the methods of Tanala cooking it is necessary to distinguish between the ancient methods, in vogue before the introduction of pottery and later of iron pots and toasting forks, and those now in use. At present the former survive only as a part of ceremonial, or as makeshifts used in the absence of proper utensils.

Traditionally, the earliest method of preparing rice was to crack the grains and toast them over a fire. This survives as a feature of the harvest sacrifice (see Agriculture), but is otherwise obsolete. Later, rice and other vegetable foods were boiled in large joints of green bamboo. The joint was propped up in an open fire and the food would be cooked before it burned through.

Meat was laid on a bed of coals or cooked in a sort of earth-oven called *antongatra*. A hole was dug and lined with large leaves. The

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

meat was cut, each piece wrapped in leaves, and the whole packed in. Stones, heated in a near-by fire, were placed on top and the whole covered with more leaves, but no earth or embers. The moisture from the meat and leaves made a little broth, which collected in the bottom of the hole. This method continued in use long after the introduction of pottery and one locality is still known as Antongatra because it was the usual practice of the people living there. 252

Calves or small cattle were sometimes cooked whole by means of thick spongy vines of two species called *vahipika* and *vahimarana*. The ends of two or three of these vines were inserted into each nostril and into the anus, while the other ends were put in a fire. The hot sap and steam conducted into the animal in this way cooked it thoroughly. It is said that this method is still used by cattle thieves when they wish to devour their booty on the spot.

At the present time nearly all food is boiled in iron pots obtained from the traders. Such pots are highly valued and when a Tanala leaves his own territory to work in a town he will usually purchase one with his first wages. Some native families have a number of them displayed on the shelf above the fireplace as a sign of wealth. They are readily loaned to neighbors or travelers, but etiquette requires that the borrower leave a little food in the pot when he returns it. Pots are supported in the fire by a low tripod made from three pointed stones bedded in the earth of the fireplace. 415 [177] [556] [426]

The amount of rice to be cooked for a meal is measured out by means of a small, stiff basket. This is of standard size and holds slightly more than the cup used as a unit in our own recipes. One measure of dry rice is allowed for each adult, with a smaller measure for each child. In some houses I saw a number of graduated rice measures, used for children of different ages. 252 [804]

The rice, which has previously been pounded and winnowed, is washed until the water drains off clear. It is then put in the pot with about twice its amount of water. It is allowed to boil dry. Most of the grains are crisp and flaky, but a layer of burned rice adheres to the vessel. After the unburned rice has been taken out, water is put in the pot, stirred and brought to a boil. This water, which tastes somewhat like weak coffee, is drunk with the meal and is considered a delicacy. As a luxury, rice may be boiled with milk or broth. It is rarely if ever salted while cooking.

Although boiled rice is the staple diet, it is never served without a side dish of some sort to give it flavor. Even the very poor have boiled greens, made from the leaves and shoots of a great variety 262

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

extremely fond of grease and sweet things of all sorts, but seem to have little taste discrimination. All their cookery is simple and the main thing they require of a meal is quantity. 261

Although the native food is simple and not very varied, their ration seems to be well balanced. There are no diseases of malnutrition and I did not see a single rachitic child among natives who adhered to their primitive diet. 146

ALCOHOL AND NARCOTICS

Beer, called *betsabetsa*, has been used by the Tanala since prehistoric times. It is usually made from a mixture of honey and water, but the natives also employ sugar cane juice, bananas, sweet potatoes and anything else with a high sugar content. The mixture is allowed to stand in open jars for a few days, until it ferments, and then drunk before it turns sour. 273

Rice beer was made in ancient times, but it is now obsolete and I could not learn the process of manufacture. There are some indications that it was formerly used in ceremonies and sacrifices very much as rum is used at the present time. It is said to have been somewhat stronger than the modern beer.

Most of the native beer is so mild that it is impossible to become intoxicated upon it. It is of little importance in the native diet and there is nothing comparable to the regular beer drinking one finds among the African tribes. Women occasionally make it for their families, as a treat, and quantities of it are prepared for feasts, but a household may go for weeks without having any.

The manufacture of rum (*toaka*) was probably learned from Europeans, but it has been in use for at least a hundred and fifty years. It is distilled from beer of any sort although honey beer and sugar cane juice are preferred because of their greater alcoholic content. Pieces of astringent bark are usually steeped in the beer before it is distilled, to give the rum more flavor. The still consists of a large jar with a tight-fitting cover. In one side of the cover there is a small hole in which a long section of bamboo, or an old gun barrel, is inserted. The joints are sealed with clay. [177]

Rum is regularly offered to the gods and ancestors and is also a prescribed part of the fees paid to med cine-men, the gifts given to witnesses of adoption, blood brotherhood, etc. Good rum is as colorless as water. At the present time, clear glass bottles are in great demand among the Tanala, who will pay two or three times as much for them as for colored glass. These are used as containers for cere- [782] [437]

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

monial rum, so that everyone can see the excellence of the liquor. The rum is always drunk without aging and is extremely potent. Quantities of it are drunk at feasts and it is felt that a person who does not get intoxicated at such a time has failed to enter into the spirit of the occasion. However, there seems to be little or no solitary drinking and alcoholism is almost unknown.

Tobacco is universally used by both men and women. The local variety grows from 3 to 4 feet high and is large leaved and white flowered. It is probably a variety of *Nicotiana tabacum*. It is never regularly cultivated, the plants growing wild in abandoned *tavy* and on old village sites. The Tanala are thoroughly convinced that it is a native plant.

The leaves are plucked when they begin to turn yellow and skewered side by side on a sliver of bamboo thrust through the bases of the stems (Fig. 9, d). The bunches are hung up in the shade until moderately dry, then brought into the dwelling and hung over the fireplace, where they soon become black with smoke. They are usually left in the smoke until used, but if the coating becomes too thick they may be taken down and hung in some other part of the house. Because of their brittleness, they are handled as little as possible.

The Tanala Menabe never smoke their own tobacco. A few of the younger men now use European cigarettes, but this seems to be an affectation. The Ikongo men smoke a little. Two types of pipe are employed, a straight pipe and a water pipe. The straight pipes are about 5 inches long, made from joints of bamboo about ½ inch in diameter. One end is sometimes inserted in the neck of a brass cartridge shell with the base cut off. The whole pipe looks very much like a cigarette holder. These pipes are identical with those used by the Bara and were probably borrowed from them (Fig. 9, e).

The water pipe is made from a maize stalk about 2 feet long. The upper joints are hollowed out and a short section of reed is thrust through the side of the stalk into the lowest cavity. On the end of the reed a small bowl is impaled. This may be made of clay, but is usually hollowed from a bit of manioc root and renewed at each smoking. The bowl and reed form an acute angle with the maize stalk (Fig. 9, c). The stalk is filled with water to nearly the level of the bowl. The smoker squats on his heels, resting the lower end of the pipe on the ground. This type of pipe is identical with that used by the southeast coast tribes.

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

the metal is hot. Some knife and meat hook handles terminate in spiral antennae (Figs. 1, f; 5, g). Iron is never inlaid with other metals. 325 [531]

There are very few Tanala silversmiths, most of their ornaments being bought from the Betsileo. The ornaments are usually made from French five franc pieces and, at the time of my visit, the government had prohibited silver working as part of a campaign to introduce paper money. Because of this, the silversmiths carried on their work surreptitiously and I could learn nothing of their methods. 326 177

WOOD WORKING

With the exception of the Zafimaniry gens, the Tanala are rather inferior wood workers. Their tools consist of the axe, chisel, knife, plane, drill, and two types of gouge. Adzes are unknown and saws were unknown until introduced by Europeans. They are still rarely used. 322 412

The axe (*antsi*) is used both as a tool and as a weapon. All native men carry one when traveling. The blade is shaped like that of an American cleaver, flat, with a square end and a straight or slightly curved cutting edge 4 to 6 inches long (Fig. 10, d). It has a straight, horizontal tang about 3 inches long which is inserted in a straight wooden handle 18 inches to 2 feet long and about 1 inch in diameter. In mounting the blade the tang is heated red hot and used to burn a hole of the proper size in the end of the handle. When this is deep enough the tang is fixed in it with a strong vegetable cement, made from a berry. The handle is then reinforced about the tang with a metal ferrule or a band of rawhide taken from a cow's tail and slipped on wet.

Chisels are of solid iron and are shaped much like our own cold chisels. They are used for fine work in hollowing wooden utensils and in dressing joints in timbers (Fig. 10, f).

Planes are shaped much like the small planes used by our own carpenters (Fig. 11, f). The plane-iron tapers to a point, which is usually recurved. It is held in place by a wooden wedge. The Zafimaniry often use plane-irons with a fluted edge (Fig. 11, e), producing a corrugated surface. Planes are used for dressing house timbers and the outside of large wooden utensils, especially boxes.

Drills are identical with those already described under Fire Making except that they are fitted with chisel-shaped iron bits. They are rarely used in wood working, small perforations usually being made with a hot iron.

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

arm, around the vertical stick, over the other arm, and back, new lengths being knotted on as needed. The other frame consists of a plank with two rows of holes into which pegs about 8 inches long are fitted. The arrangement of the pegs can be changed to give hanks of different lengths (F.g. 14, f). When enough of the filament have been knotted on, the hank is removed and laid aside to be dyed. The plateau method of boiling raffia with lye and then twisting it into thread seems to be unknown.

At the present time European aniline dyes have almost supplanted the original vegetable colors in raffia weaving and only a few of the older women know the native processes. Black is made by crushing the leaves of the *lalona*, boiling them and adding ferruginous earth. When the mixture is cold the raffia is put in and soaked for a day. This gives a fine and very fast color which continues in regular use in spite of the imported dyes. Yellow is made with turmeric. The root is pounded in a mortar, mixed with cold water, and the raffia steeped in it for half a day to a day, according to the depth of color desired. It is then washed in running water and dried. This dye is still occasionally used. A good orange dye was formerly made from the roots of the *vazavaritra*, a bush or small tree. The bark from the roots was pounded to powder in a mortar and boiled for an hour with the raffia, which was then washed. This dye was never used with *hafotra*, but simply because the plant grows in the territory of the raffia weaving gentes and sparsely if at all in that of the Zafimaniry. Red was made by boiling the raffia with the bark of the *nato* tree, and a pale grayish blue was made with indigo. The *vazavaritra*, *nato*, and indigo dyes are rarely used today. All dyeing is done before the fabric is woven.

The Tanala make a very limited use of differential warp dyeing. After the chain is ready for the loom groups of threads are drawn together and tightly wrapped with raffia. The chain is then dyed, the exposed portions taking the color while the others remain uncolored. Stripes with alternate plain and colored sections are made in this way, but there are no real designs and dyeing with several colors is unknown. The technique is rarely used and only one example was collected. Threads of mixed color are made by twisting together two filaments dyed in different colors, as black and yellow.

The loom (*tenona*) used in raffia weaving is identical with the oldest Betsimisaraka type (Fig. 15, a). The modern Betsimisaraka type, with treadles, is unknown. The warp is laid on the loom continuously, passing round and round both beams. Tension is secured

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

291 used mats for clothing. Their garments were made from bark cloth in the earliest times, then, after the introduction of weaving, from raffia cloth.

[177] Except among the Zafimaniry, Tanala costume has been little influenced by European contact. Commercial cotton cloth is beginning to come into use, but the garments are still made according to the ancient pattern. The men regularly wear a smock (*akanjo*). The Tanala say that this garment was originally made from a single long strip of material with a hole in the center, for the head. This strip covered the body front and back, but was so narrow that the sides did not meet. It was allowed to hang loose, the lower edges coming to a little above the knee. Later, the strip was made wider and sewn up along the left side. The edges overlapped on the right side and were held together by a tie or by a wooden button and loop (Fig. 20, a). Still later, it was sewn up both sides—the modern form. The original poncho type did not become obsolete among the Menabe until about sixty years ago.

The matting *akanjo* of the modern Ikongo is made in five pieces, one for each half of the front and back and a large, circular piece for the skirt (Fig. 20, b). Each garment is made to its owner's measure. The neck is cut square or V-shaped and there are no sleeves. The skirt, which comes to a little below the knee, flares somewhat, to permit free leg movement. Sometimes a pocket is woven into the front of the skirt on the right side.

The raffia *akanjo*, worn by most of the Menabe, is made from a single broad strip of raffia cloth with a hole cut in the center for the head. The neck is reinforced with a yoke of the same material (Fig. 16, c). Work *akanjo* are sleeveless, but those worn on dress occasions are often made with full-length sleeves puffed at the wrist. This is probably due to European influence. The skirt is moderately full and somewhat longer than in the matting *akanjo*. The pocket, if any, is in the middle of the back, between the shoulder blades. It opens inside the garment. It is difficult for the wearer to reach it, but quite impossible for anyone else to pick it. This is the reason which the Tanala assign for placing it in such an inconvenient position.

At the present time, all Tanala men wear a loin cloth (*salaka*) under the *akanjo*. This is considered essential for decency and is worn even with European trousers. The Menabe say that they have always used the *salaka*. I could get no information on this point for the Ikongo, but I doubt whether they used it in the earliest period. The men of the southeast coast tribes, who used mat

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

VII. GOVERNMENT

In describing Tanala government it is necessary to treat the Menabe and Ikongo divisions separately. Until about one hundred years ago the Menabe had no political or governmental unit larger than the gens. Later, with the aid of the Imerina empire, the Zafiakotry gens succeeded in bringing several of the other gentes under its domination and a kingdom was established. This kingdom tried to copy the organization of the Imerina kingdom, but it never became well integrated or thoroughly organized. The Ikongo, on the other hand, had kingdoms of long standing and had developed a stable system of government with officials of varying rank. 631

THE MENABE

Among the Menabe each village was practically autonomous. The authority of the chief of the gens was recognized, but he never interfered in village affairs and was only appealed to in disputes between villages or in serious criminal cases. Each village had a chief, the *Andriambavety*, who was elected informally and could be deposed at will. There were no ceremonies of investiture and he had no special insignia. He was considered simply the first among equals. To be eligible for the office a man had to be personally popular, rich, generous, a good diplomat, a good warrior and a good orator. The *Andriambavety* had no authority over the persons or property of the other villagers. His duties were to advise and help them, to act as arbitrator in minor disputes, if brought to him voluntarily, to organize and coordinate communal activities, seeing that labor and expense were equitably divided, and to act as representative for his village in its dealings with other villages or with the chief of the gens. The office carried no salary or perquisites, beyond personal exemption from labor. Under French control the office of *Andriambavety* has been retained and its powers and its responsibilities considerably increased. He must provide the quotas of men demanded by the government for forced labor and cannot be deposed by the village without government consent. Bribes to the *Andriambavety* are now common. 618 643 622 [177]

The affairs of the village were controlled by a group of important men, comparable to the "key men" of American communities. The position was unofficial and the natives seem to have had no generic term for such leaders. They are now referred to by the French word 623

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

695 was guilty. Fines were rarely levied, thieves being punished by a severe beating and repeated offenses by formal disownment and expulsion from the village. Trial by ordeal was less common than among the Ikongo and the ordeal was administered by an *ombiasy*, not by the village chief. It was used in doubtful cases of theft, but mainly for the detection of *mpamosavy*. The hot spade ordeal was used, also another in which the village *ombiasy* took a chicken belonging to the accused and administered medicine to it, saying: "If so-and-so has committed this crime, die. If he has not, live." If the person was guilty the chicken would die. Guilty *mpamosavy* were killed on the spot. Although the Menabe had much less fear of *mpamosavy* than the Ikongo, one gens, the Zafindiamanana, subjected the whole adult population to an ordeal when the presence of one was suspected. An ox was killed and the *ombiasy* took the liver, cut it into small pieces, and mixed it with water and earth from the village tomb, placing the whole on a spade. While he mixed the ingredients he prayed: "*Zanahary* and *Fahasivy* [ancestral shades], if anyone eating this is an *mpamosavy*, let him die." Everyone then came forward and ate a piece of the liver and the guilty person would die within twenty-four hours. Failure to eat was considered a confession of guilt. Informants from this gens said that they used no other ordeals.

695 177 In general the ideas of formal legal procedure and of trial by ordeal seem to have been least developed among those gentes which had least contact with the more advanced tribes of the coast and plateau. It seems probable that the whole legal complex, at least among the Menabe, was due to outside influence and that originally all cases were settled informally by the village council.

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

776 to the native mind and are never invoked alone. The Non-Human Spirits are minor Beings of little power, comparable to our own fairies and goblins. They are sometimes mischievous and terrifying, but are not taken seriously. The Spirits of the Dead take an active interest in the affairs of the living and constantly interfere to assist or injure. They are also partially dependent upon the living, their well being in the spirit world being increased by the sacrifices made to them. They are the objects of Tanala worship to the practical exclusion of all other Beings.

DEITIES

The native term for Deity is *Zanahary* (*za*, article, *nahary*, "creator"). As a noun the word is used to designate a powerful Being or class of Beings who have never been human. As an adjective it carries the significance of "divine," "supernatural" or simply "extraordinary." I have heard it used with little more weight than the English "wonderful."

The Menabe are vague as to the number of *Zanahary*. Ordinary individuals uniformly say that there is only one. Priests and *ombiasy* hesitate when the question is put to them and I have seen two priests discuss it earnestly, citing passages from the rituals. All the longer invocations include a number of names of *Zanahary* and the point at issue was whether these referred to different Beings or to forms or attributes of the same Being. All finally decided that there must be several *Zanahary*, basing this on the use of certain plural grammatical forms, but it was plain that the question had not occurred to them until I brought it up.

The reason for this vagueness is that prayers and sacrifices are always addressed to *Zanahary* and the ancestors jointly. The ancestors are all important and the *Zanahary* invocation little more than a polite gesture. My priestly informants were doubtful whether *Zanahary* ever interfered directly in ordinary human affairs. At the same time, as *Zanahary* had made everything and had given power to the ancestors, they had to be mentioned in all rituals. However, *Zanahary* are thought of as individuals, not simply as supernatural power. The concept has nothing of the impersonal, mechanistic quality of Mana.

776 It seems almost certain that the *Zanahary* were at one time more
● 177 important in the native religion and more clearly individualized.
[769] The present monotheistic trend is due partly to contact with Christians and other monotheistic native groups and partly to a steady increase in the importance of ancestor worship.

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

increase in the importance of ancestor worship. An *ombiasy* told me that the ancient Tanala believed that every human group and species of animal, and even every individual, had its own *Zanahary*, who had created it and looked after its welfare. This belief is still held by the neighboring Bara tribe and there are hints of it in several other tribes.

The names of the *Zanahary* given in the invocations certainly suggest Beings with different attributes. They include Andranofalafa (god who lives in a house thatched with *falafa*), Mandiovazankoho (god with the clean finger nails), Rangidana (a small, slim-waisted insect, a symbol of speed) and Masomamakizahana (a ceremonial name for the sun). There are a number of other names which can no longer be translated even by the priests. The rituals further indicate that these Beings were believed to live above the sky. One passage suggests that they slept unless awakened by an invocation. Others speak of them as sitting on gold or silver stools, watching men and sending them good and evil. They visited earth when summoned to partake of the sacrifice, returning when they had eaten their share. They went from earth to heaven by means of a chain of gold or a cord of silver. Beyond the names and facts embalmed in the rituals, even the wisest of the priests know nothing.

A single gens of the Menabe, the Zafimaniry, consider the sun and moon as Deities and pray and sacrifice to them in sickness or trouble. These sacrifices are made at the regular sacred place or in the *kianza* ("village square"). The ritual is the same as for other sacrifices, the invocation including the ancestors, but the sun and moon are especially appealed to and stressed. Apparently there are no ceremonies for eclipses.

The Ikongo may have originally held the same shadowy beliefs as the Menabe, but they have been monotheists since the beginning of the historic period. To them *Zanahary* signifies a single great and all-powerful deity, creator and ruler of the world. Proverbs indicate that he is considered just and benevolent. He protects the widow and orphan and punishes wrongdoers. At the same time, there is much doubt as to how far he interferes in human affairs. Apparently he is thought to delegate his power to the ancestors, directing them and acting through them. Only great catastrophes or strange and inexplicable events are ascribed to his direct intervention. He is never prayed to except in connection with the ancestors. The term *Zanahary* is also applied here to the souls of dead kings, being linked with their names, like a title.

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

The Ikongo have had a good deal of contact with the tribes of the southeast coast, where there have been Arab settlements since the eighth century, and one of their noble gentes claims Arab descent. Their concept of *Zanahary* is probably due to an attenuated Mohammedan influence.

The relation of *Zanahary* or the *Zanahary* to Fate is so vague in the minds of the natives that they can hardly be said to have any opinion on the subject. In general they conclude that Fate must emanate from the *Zanahary*, who are the source of everything, but they doubt whether the Deities ever intervene after the mechanism had been set going.

The attitude toward *Zanahary* is due to the practical outlook of the natives. Although the *Zanahary* are great and powerful, they are remote and little interested in human affairs. Nothing is to be gained from them, so there are no emotional attitudes in regard to them. They have been relegated to the abyss of first causes and their number, nature, etc., have ceased to be matters of interest.

NON-HUMAN SPIRITS

The Tanala have a vague belief in the existence of non-human spirits but, like the Deities, these are of no importance in comparison with the ancestors. They never worship or sacrifice to them and doubt whether they interfere in human affairs.

The *angalampona* (from *angatra*, "spirit," and *ampona*, "foolish") are little Beings about 3 feet tall who live in dense forest. They look like miniature men but are covered with hair and have very long hair on their heads. Their hands and faces are human, but they have pointed teeth, like lemurs. Bits of their hair are often found caught on bushes. They go nude but, although they are both male and female, the sexes cannot be distinguished. During the day they hide in holes, coming out at night to hunt shrimps, which they eat raw. They also steal food from the fields and from houses, and can make the occupants of a house fall into a deep sleep. They are very partial to cooked food and never steal anything else from dwellings. Shrimp catchers, who build rough shelters in the woods and spend the night there, often see them but are never able to catch them. They are considered slightly mischievous but quite harmless.

The *tsiombiomby* (lit. "not an ox") are large Beings in the form of four-footed animals, somewhat like horses. They chase people on lonely roads. There is one on the road between Tombony and

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755 the spirits tell the cause of the illness and the medicine to be given,
787 always speaking. If the sick person is not present, the *ombiasy* tells the spirits to go and look at him, and he will be conscious of cold hands touching him all over. After answering the questions, the spirits drink the rum, dance and sing. The dancing and singing are accompanied by rhythmic rappings on the floor and walls, but always near the *ombiasy*. If a great deal of rum has been provided the spirits may pass it around to the living after they have drunk all they wish. If there is a doubter present they will seize his wrist when he reaches out for the cup. Finally they say they are tired and must go, and troop off noisily. The spirits are the souls of ancestors, but no individuals can be identified.

Perhaps the most interesting feature of this belief is the large number of natives who are, or have been, skeptical as to the authenticity of the phenomena. I found this quite common among persons who had had little or no contact with outsiders and am convinced that it is not due to European influence. It is reflected in the general attitude toward the *ombiasy manangatra*, who rank far below the *ombiasy mpsikidy* in popular estimation. Several informants declared flatly that the seances were faked and that the *ombiasy* produced the voices, etc., himself. Others had been skeptical, but had been convinced by personal knowledge of cures or by having felt the spirit hands during seances. The stories told by the latter were curiously similar to our own spiritualists' accounts of ectoplasm. They said that the hands of the spirits were strong but so soft that they seemed boneless and that their flesh was moist, excessively cold, and had a different texture from human skin.

787 Within the last twenty-five or thirty years another type of *ombiasy manangatra* has come into existence. At one end of most Tanala houses there is a shelf or partial ceiling which forms a dark loft about 8 feet deep and 6 feet above the floor. The practitioner places a mat here with charms on it and the spirits come and rest on it. The spirits whistle or make cheeping noises when persons enter the house. If the intruder is frightened or runs away the *ombiasy* reassures him and tells him that it is only the spirits asking who has come. He puts questions to them and interprets their whistling answers. They are present both day and night. Apparently *ombiasy ndolo* are beginning to adopt this trick. It is said to be of foreign [177] origin but I know of nothing like it among the neighboring tribes. Intelligent natives are even more skeptical of it than of the regular seances.

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

competition. There is usually only one *ombiasy* in a village and never more than two. I could learn of no case in which two *ombiasy* had pitted themselves against each other, at least publicly. 791

Even in the old days of constant intertribal warfare there were a few foreign *ombiasy* operating among the Tanala. Most of these belonged to the Antaimorona tribe, which still enjoys a great reputation for magic. They are said to have been responsible for the introduction of a regular calendar of lucky and unlucky days. The foreigners were looked up to and could command higher fees for both services and instruction than the native trained men. They were especially in demand when a new village was to be founded. By similar reasoning, Tanala *ombiasy* who had settled among the Betsileo were thought superior by that tribe. 791 177

ACTIVITIES OF THE OMBIASY

DIVINATION

Divination is probably the most important of all the *ombiasy's* activities, for it is the prerequisite for nearly all the others. By means of it the *ombiasy* discovers the cause of illness, the hazards which will attend a journey or business enterprise, the chances of a person in love, etc., and deduces which remedy or charm will prove most effective under the circumstances. 787 755

The Tanala word for divination of all sorts is *sikidy*, a term applied to both the process and the mechanical means used. The Ikongo practice three forms, divination by water, divination by sand, and divination by seeds. The Menabe say that only divination by seeds is native and very few of their *ombiasy* know any other form. Haruspication is altogether lacking and there is no real divination from the flight of birds, etc., although certain acts of birds and animals are considered ominous.

Divination by water is rare and has apparently been borrowed from the southeast coast tribes in very recent times. Water is put in a clear glass bottle, shaken vigorously and then held up and examined. Some practitioners do not look directly at the bottle but study its reflection in a small mirror. The answer is deduced from the movement of the water, its cloudiness, the way in which sediment collects, etc. Apparently each practitioner has his own rules.

In divination by sand, a thin layer of dry sand, usually black, is spread smoothly over a wooden tray. The operator makes marks at random with a small stick, or his finger, and studies the resulting patterns. I was unable to learn the rules, but suspect that it has a

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

destiny of a child is also determined by the day of its birth and the *ombiasy* must discover what this is, and, if evil, take steps to change it. 777 791

The Tanala year consists of twelve lunar months called *volona* (lit. "moon"). These run continuously and there seems to be no idea of the year beginning with any one of them. The Menabe month names are as follows: 805

January, *Vatravatra*	May, *Afosa*	September, *Shakave*
February, *Asotry*	June, *Bolaha*	October, *Volambita*
March, *Hatsiha*	July, *Maka*	November, *Sharamasina*
April, *Valasira*	August, *Shakashe*	December, *Sharamanitra*

The month begins with the new moon and continues twenty-eight days. Each month is characterized by certain climatic features, the blooming of a certain plant, etc., and when the month count seems to lag too far behind the seasons a month is repeated. This is done informally and by general consent. There is no central authority to which the rectification of the calendar can be referred. Each month is divided into four weeks of seven days.

Among the Menabe the month count is only used incidentally in determining lucky and unlucky days. At the present time the better practitioners use a regular calendar based on the position of the days in the month, but all informants agreed that this is a recent innovation, learned from the Antaimorona tribe. I did not learn how the significance of birth days was determined in ancient times. Lucky days for activities were determined as follows: 777 805 [177]

The time from new to full moon was propitious for sacrifices and beginning enterprises; the time while the moon was waning was not propitious. Thursdays and Sundays were also unpropitious and children born on these days had a bad destiny. In appointing the time for a sacrifice or beginning an enterprise the latter half of the month and Thursdays and Sundays were eliminated. The *ombiasy* then selected one of the remaining days at random and made the shorter form of seed *sikidy*. If the arrangement ○○ *Asimbola* appeared in the positions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 12 and 16, the day was propitious. The *sikidy* was repeated five times and if this arrangement did not appear, another day was tried. 777 787

The calendar now used to determine lucky and unlucky days is as follows, the month beginning on Monday. 777 805

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

754 who are professional sorcerers, working evil repeatedly for the pleasure they derive from it. Such persons are called *mpamosavy* and are universally feared and hated, although the practice of occasional sorcery is condoned. Apparently *mpamosavy* have become much more numerous since the Imerina conquered the Tanala and many informants denied that they existed prior to the conquest. There may be some truth in this, for stories told of their antics are very much like those told by the Imerina about their own sorcerers.

The *mpamosavy*, who may be either men or women, are not content to injure their enemies by charms. They steal out of their houses at night, nude except for a white *lamba* which is wrapped around the head like a turban. They go to tombs, especially shortly after a burial, and dance there, rejoicing. This strengthens the influences which have caused the death and brings about the deaths of others. They rob tombs, carrying off valuables deposited with the dead and taking bones and parts of bodies, which are used to concoct evil charms. During my stay an *mpamosavy* stole a skull from a tomb and placed it in the middle of the village square, where it was found next day. The natives were less terrified than one might have expected and one of the men whose duty it was to shift old bodies at a burial gathered it up without ceremony, wrapped it in a *lamba* and took it back. There were no ceremonies for purification or to avert evil and within a week the incident seemed to have been forgotten.

When anyone in the village is ill, the *mpamosavy* will come and cry outside the house at night, mourning as if he were already dead. This strengthens the evil influences and makes the person die. They also scratch at doors and windows, terrifying persons in the house and acting as though they wished to break in, although they never enter. Sometimes they ride cattle until the cattle are exhausted, break down fences and do other wanton damage. Although they are greatly feared, they have no power to injure a person who confronts them boldly and several informants expressed a wish to encounter one. The reason for this was that, as the punishment for the crime was death, if one captured an *mpamosavy* one could demand a huge sum for releasing him and concealing his identity.

754 928 Tanala *mpamosavy* apparently are solitary, not operating in organized groups like those of the Imerina. Several informants expressed the belief that a person might be an *mpamosavy* without knowing it himself, citing instances. Such a person would be forced to become one by the power of some evil charm. There seemed to

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

524 The top principle is also employed in a game of skill played by
[525] men and older boys, often with wagers. The tops used in this game are made from large, flat seeds about 1½ inches in diameter and ⅜ to ½ inch thick. A round hole about ¾ inch in diameter is cut in one side of the seed and the kernel removed. A bone point is then attached to the lower side with beeswax (Fig. 27, g). The player spins the seed by inserting the tips of the index fingers of both hands in the opening in its top and giving it a quick twirl. The players stand and flip their tops at another seed of the same variety lying on the ground, or at a small hole or other mark. The player who strikes the mark with the bone point on his seed wins.

Stilts, known by a term which means literally "wooden feet," have been used since prehistoric times. They are made from saplings about 1½ inches in diameter and 5 feet long. About 18 inches from the bottom the stub of a small branch is left projecting as a foot rest. The upper ends of the stilts are grasped in the hands. Stilt walking seems to be a solitary sport, practiced mainly by young children.

Among minor toys may be mentioned slender forked sticks, used by boys to imitate cattle horns when they play at fighting bulls or bull baiting. A heavier stick, with a cow's hoof carved on the end, is also used to make artificial cattle tracks in games of cattle stealing or pursuing thieves (Fig. 26, a).

[177] Pop guns are also to be reckoned among the minor toys, although they are pretty certainly of European origin. They are made from sections of bamboo about 1½ inches in diameter and 2 feet long. A strip of bamboo is bent into U form and inserted in a slit in the top of the tube, to serve as a spring. This is drawn back and held by another strip of bamboo which is pivoted to the tube by a wooden pin (Fig. 28, c). These pop guns are used to shoot small stones or clay pellets.

An interesting toy consists of a short section of reed or small bamboo with the end split and spread into a cone. A pith ball is placed in the cone and the player balances it there by throwing back his head and blowing through the tube with exactly the right force (Fig. 27, a).

224 While I was in Ambohimanga the boys frequently brought me
868 small models of traps which they had made. These were offered for sale and I doubt whether such models were used in their own play. They begin to make real traps for small birds and mammals at a
000 very early age. Tanala toys seem to be characterised by an almost

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FTS Tanala FTS

plicated plots. The family will be taken through all sorts of adventures, with marriages, births, deaths, building of new houses, and all the routine of daily life. This game is a pure exercise of imagination, comparable to our own children's "playing house" except that the player does not participate. Several children may play at it together, but the players are never identified with the characters and there is no element of contest. 524

Games of chance appear to be entirely lacking, but there are two games of skill, played by adults. One of these, *katra*, is known all over Madagascar, although the rules probably vary somewhat from tribe to tribe. The other, a form of chess, is certainly of Arab origin and seems to be limited to the Tanala Ikongo and a few tribes on the southeast coast. *Katra* is played mainly by women and older children, chess only by men. [177] [562]

Katra is played on a diagram having from twenty-four to forty positions which are arranged in four parallel rows. Many tribes employ regular gaming boards with pits at the positions and a larger pit at one end for spare pieces, but the Tanala content themselves with marking the positions on the ground. The pieces used are everywhere large, round gray seeds about the size of marbles. These seeds do not grow in the plateau and the tribes there import them from the east coast.

The Tanala normally employ thirty-two pits, arranged in four rows of eight each. The method of play can best be described with the aid of a diagram. In this the letters indicate the position and the numbers show the number of seeds in each position. Before beginning the game two seeds are placed at each pit.

1

I	*J*	*K*	*L*	*M*	*N*	*O*	*P*
2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
A	*B*	*C*	*D*	*E*	*F*	*G*	*H*
2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
a	*b*	*c*	*d*	*e*	*f*	*g*	*h*
2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
i	*j*	*k*	*l*	*m*	*n*	*o*	*p*
2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2

Diagram 1 represents the initial set-up. The first player selects a position at random, usually one in the back row, takes out the seeds and drops them one at a time into the other pits along the

1: Linton E-6 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

534 from the midrib of a raffia palm frond. The bamboo instrument appears to be the oldest and the Tanala use it to the practical exclusion of the raffia one.

The bamboo *marovany* is made from a section of large bamboo, about 3 inches in diameter, which is cut off 2 to 3 inches beyond the septum at both ends (Fig. 30, g). The strings are made by cutting two parallel grooves a sixteenth of an inch apart ending an inch within the septa. The strip of fiber between the grooves is then detached from the body of the bamboo, but left attached at the ends. Above and below the strings, the joint is wrapped with several turns of split vine, to keep the ends of the strings from tearing out. The number of strings varies from eight to sixteen, evenly spaced around the entire circumference of the instrument. It is tuned by inserting a bridge, cut from dry gourd shell, under each end of each string. The varying height and position of these bridges give different tones. I was unable to understand the Tanala method of tuning. Apparently each player arranged his instrument to suit himself. The Imerina and Betsileo now tune their instruments on the European scale, covering two octaves.

The player sits and holds the instrument on his knees vertically, with the upper end directed slightly outward, and picks the strings with his fingers. Among the Imerina, young dandies often permit the nails on the little fingers of both hands to grow very long, as much as an inch and a half, and use them as picks to reach the strings on the farther side of the instrument. Such nails also indicate that their owner does not perform manual labor, so they are highly valued. The player often sings and accompanies himself. The instrument has a pleasing tone and could easily be adapted to European music.

The raffia stem *marovany* is identical in principle with the bamboo one just described (Fig. 30, h). The section of midrib is first split longitudinally and hollowed out for about three-quarters of its length. The two halves are then lashed together by vine wrappings at the ends. The tone is rather inferior to that of the bamboo *marovany*.

The *lokanga*, a curious three-stringed guitar with a large resonator made from an inverted half gourd, and the true guitar, both seem to be unknown to the Tanala. The former is identical with an [m] instrument used in the Congo, in Africa, and is almost certainly an importation from that continent. It is a favorite instrument with wandering musicians, who are fairly numerous in the plateau and among the tribes of the west and south. The guitar, from its form, [m] is probably of Indian origin.

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) ;933 FY8 Tanala FY8

531 part, or small figurines of men and animals which are made for sale
322 to Europeans, and is indistinguishable from that of the Bara.

Among the Menabe, other than the Zafimaniry, there are no professional carvers. However, men who make large ladles for sale now decorate the handles of these with simple designs. The handle is first blackened for a few inches above the bowl. This may be done either by searing the wood with a red-hot iron and then rubbing the charred surface with a rag dipped in grease, or simply by rubbing with a mixture of grease and soot. The designs are then cut through this black layer, exposing the lighter wood beneath. They are large and very simple. They consist of bands, spots, etc., symmetrically arranged (Fig. 7, d). The carving is so shallow that when the black color has disappeared through use it is often difficult to tell whether the ladle has been decorated or not. I could not trace the origin of this type of decoration, but it is said to be a recent development. It may have been borrowed from either the Bara or the tribes of the southeast coast, both of whom use a similar technique. The ladle makers say that it increases the salability of their wares.

The Zafimaniry are excellent wood carvers and, in former times, decorated their houses, beds, and some of their wooden utensils with beautiful and rather complicated designs. At the present time wooden houses and the large enclosed beds (see Dwellings) are obsolete, but the
[439] carving of utensils is still common. Zafimaniry carvings are in demand with Europeans and civilized natives and they have recently begun to produce objects of new types, especially folding tables and purely ornamental boxes. The latter are rectangular, a shape unknown in ancient times (Figs. 32, e; 33, c; 34, a), or graceful modifications of the comb-topped type formerly used for tinder boxes (Fig. 33, a, b). At the time of my visit there was even a small factory at Ambositra,
[171] where several Zafimaniry carvers worked under the direction of the Imerina owner. The products of this factory were marketed in the capital. Although the carvings made for sale are technically inferior to the old work and rarely show the more complicated designs, there has been little European influence on the art itself. In over a hundred specimens which I examined I could not detect a single European motif.

322 The Zafimaniry say that their art of carving was already fully
173 developed when they entered the Tanala territory from the plateau.
531 However, they have certain stories in regard to its development which probably contain much truth. They say that, in the earliest times, they did not carve designs but decorated their wooden objects

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

322 531 173 by means of a fluted plane (Fig. 11, e, f). This plane gave a series of shallow, parallel grooves. By changing the direction of the planing it was possible to produce cross hatching with the lines either diagonal or at right angles. The fluted plane decoration has only become obsolete in the last fifteen or twenty years. An example of it is shown in Fig. 32, a. The same effects are now produced with a very narrow gouge (Fig. 10, j). This is more laborious but gives much greater precision.

The earliest instrument used for carving designs was a small knife of the ordinary type (Fig. 1, f). At the present time this has been [177] almost completely replaced by small chisels, usually of European origin. Most of these are straight edged, but turners' chisels, with a slanting edge, are just beginning to come into use. Both chisels and gouges are used without a mallet. The tools are usually held and used in European fashion, but it seemed to me that the carvers worked toward their bodies rather more than white artisans would have done.

322 531 All the old Zafimaniry carvings are made on hard wood. Soft woods are now beginning to be used, but only for export pieces. The surface of the wood is never blackened. Before the carving begins, the surface is smoothed and given a dull polish. Commercial sandpaper is now used for this even in remote districts. The ancient carvers worked free hand, carrying the design in their minds, but at present practically all of them sketch in the designs in pencil. This is done to save time. Formerly, large circles and arcs were outlined with an iron point attached to a piece of cord while smaller ones were [177] carved free hand. At present, European compasses are in almost universal use.

The Zafimaniry do no carving in the round or even in modeled relief. The decoration follows the contour of the object exactly and the carving appears flat, due to a complete absence of curved surfaces. The designs are worked out by a combination of very shallow and moderately deep cuts with no intermediate levels. The shallow cuts are a sixteenth of an inch or less deep and are made with a gouge or the point of a knife. I saw only one instance in which the gouge had been used to outline a curve. Apparently the limitation of its use to straight lines is not due to lack of skill, for the carvers readily made curves with it on request, but to the fact that it is a substitute for the fluted plane. The latter could only be used for straight lines and the convention thus established has persisted. The knife is used for outlining circles and curves. Such outlines are usually simple

[See category 116, p. 95 - analyst]